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ABSTRACT

In 1980, a study was conducted to determine the characteristics, attitudes, and subsequent experiences of women who had completed the Women's Education Development Incentive (WENDI) re-entry program at Brevard Community College, Florida, in 1977. From the original mailing of 79 questionnaires, 33 usable responses were returned. Two-thirds of the respondents were between the ages of 40 and 60; 40% were unmarried; 27% were divorced; and nearly half were high school graduates. Of the respondents, 82% were working, with 51.8% of these women employed in clerical occupations. As had been hypothesized, women who completed the program reported increased self-confidence, improved family and co-worker relationships, and greater ability to be assertive and make decisions. Unexpectedly, only 39.4% of the respondents had returned to school after completing WENDI. Single heads of households supporting children (27.3% of the respondents) tended to be younger, have less education, and have lower family incomes than the 30.3% of the respondents who were married working women with children. The study revealed needs for: (1) further study of single women heading households; (2) strong encouragement for re-entry women to enter non-traditional occupations which offer higher wages and better benefits; (3) increased efforts to place women in well paying positions offering on-the-job training; and (4) the provision of role models. A review of relevant literature and the questionnaire are included. (Author/HB)

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AN ASSESSMENT OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE REENTRY PROGRAM FOR WOMEN

JOY DAVIS FORREST

A Thesis presented to the Faculty of the College of Liberal Arts in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Arts

Stetson University

October 1981

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AN ASSESSMENT OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

REENTRY PROGRAM FOR WOMEN

by

Joy Davis Forrest

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the attitudes and present status of women who completed the Women's Education Development Incentive (WENDI) reentry program at Brevard Community College in Cocoa, Florida, in 1977, a program offered under the Department of Continuing Education for Women.

The study was designed to test the following hypotheses; that participants will indicate improvement in their level of self-confidence, in relationships with family and co-workers, and in their ability to be assertive and make decisions; that a majority of the women will have returned to school since taking the reentry course, will be working, and will have positive feelings about themselves; that a number of women will be single heads of households supporting children as compared to married working women with children.

A questionnaire was designed to elicit the attitudes and subsequent experiences of women who had completed the reentry course three years ago. Questions were pilot-tested on WENDI staff. The survey instrument was mailed to a random sampling of 158 women who had voluntarily enrolled in the program and who represented nine WENDI classes given at the south, central, and north campuses of the college. Thirty-three usable questionnaires were returned from the original mailing of 79. A follow-up postcard, letter, and phone calls were employed until every member of the sample was accounted for.

Questionnaire items were translated into 39 variables, and the data for each variable were recorded on a statistical coding sheet. The raw data were summarized and analyzed through an SPSS program which yielded descriptive statistics upon which the results of the study are based. Chi-square tests computed on a Minitab program provided additional data with which to test the hypotheses.

Demographic findings revealed: two-thirds of the women were in their forties and fifties, the largest group being in their fifties; 40 percent of the women were not married; 27 percent were divorced; nearly half the women were high school graduates, and almost half had two or four years of college; single working mothers were found to be younger and to have less education than married working mothers; the median age of the female family householder and of the reentry women in the sample was 42.5 years, indicating a continuing trend toward younger female householders, caused in large part by the increasing divorce rate.

Findings of the study revealed that all but one of the eight hypotheses were confirmed by results of analysis of the data. Women who completed the reentry course improved in their self-confidence, family relationships, co-worker relationships, and ability to be assertive and make decisions. A majority of the women were working (82 percent), and indicated they had positive feelings about themselves (73.7 percent). A significant number of the women were single heads of households supporting children (27.3 percent) compared to married working women with children (30.3 percent). However, the study rejected the hypothesis that a majority of the women would return to school after completing the reentry class. Only 39.4 percent returned to school at some time after WENDI.

Other findings were: the number of single working women supporting themselves and young dependents and the number of dependents they support were strikingly similar to the number of married working women supporting young dependents in two-parent families and the number of deperdents they support. However, the difference in earnings between single female householder families and two-parent families is very dissimilar, since the majority of working women in the nation work in low-paying occupations, primarily clerical and operative, a fact this study confirms. Clerical jobs comprised 51.8 percent of the occupations held by working women in the sample; 22.2 percent held operative jobs, and only 9.1 percent held professional, managerial, or technical positions. Results of the study indicate women need to learn non-traditional skills so they can be hired for non-traditional jobs (occupations traditionally held by men) that pay higher wages. This should reduce the crowding in women's occupations so wages in them can gradually improve. Women need programs that improve their earnings and prepare them for economic independence.

Recommendations include: further study on the needs of women who are single heads of households supporting dependents, because they are a growing segment of the working population and because one-third of these families live at or below the poverty level; strong encouragement to reentry women to prepare themselves for non-traditional occupations which offer higher wages and better benefits; efforts to place reentry women with employers who will train them on the job at reasonable salaries; provision of an abundance of role models during reentry class for reentry women to identify with; efforts to determine why more women do not educate or train themselves for better-paying jobs before entering the job market.

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CHAPTER I

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine the attitudes and present status of women who participated in the Women's Education Development Incentive (WENDI) job-readiness program at Brevard Community College, Florida, in 1977.

Sub-Problems

The central questions around which the survey was developed were as follows:

1. What are the personal characteristics of the women who participated in the WENDI program, sponsored by the Brevard Community College in 1977?
2. What are the career development needs of the women?
3. How effective was the program in meeting these needs?
4. How do the participants perceive themselves three years after completing the program?

Definition of Terms

The common terms in this study are interpreted as follows:

Brevard Community College has its main campus in Cocoa,

Florida, in central Brevard County. The other two campuses are located in Melbourne at the south end of the county and in Titusville at the north end of the county. Brevard stretches 72 miles along the east coast of central Florida. This study has been conducted through the WENDI office on the main campus in Cocoa.

Internal barriers are psychological obstacles that tend to inhibit women who are reentering the work force.

Internality is the development of a self-concept characterized by internal locus of control which facilitates an expectancy of success.

Reentry women are those who have been out of the work force for years, and who want to reenter the working world.

Self-development is the state when the women set their own education and career goals as the result of self-awareness and increased self-confidence.

WENDI is the acronym which stands for Women's Education Development Incentive, a job-readiness reentry program for women at Brevard Community College.

WENDI program is a term to be distinguished from the WENDI course or class, because the WENDI class has benefits that are available through the community college. Some of these are personal counseling with a WENDI counselor, academic counselors who can advise reentry women who decide to return to school, opportunities for non-traditional education in the Industrial and Technical divisions of the college, and financial assistance available to WENDI participants.

WENDI women are those women who have completed the six-week reentry course at Brevard Community College during the year January to December 1977.

Delimitations

This study was limited to an appraisal of the value of the Women's Education Development Incentive classes at Brevard Community College as viewed by a random sample of the women who completed the course in 1977. The appraisal was intended to evaluate to what degree the reentry course met its objective to assist women planning to re-enter the work force.

Since the women in the WENDI classes were at a transitional stage in their lives, and a significant number may have moved away or changed their names in the three years since they took the course, these factors may have limited the response to the questionnaire survey. Also, participants entering the program under Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) funding were not included in the survey when it became evident they comprised half the population and could be expected to yield a small return.

Basic Assumptions

This study is based on the following assumptions:

1. All women have the need for self-fulfillment and the feeling of worth that results from commitment to purposeful activities.
2. A positive self-concept is an important factor for women who plan to assume full-time employment after an absence of a number of years.
3. To be successful in the world of work, individuals must set career goals within the limits of their capabilities.
4. Women who have never been employed or those who have been out of the work force for extended periods need an orienta-

tion that is different from those who have been employed continuously.

5. Women are largely unaware of the job opportunities available to them in the working world.
6. The WENDI classes surveyed were representative of all WENDI classes because they were held in the north, central, and south areas of Brevard county, thus drawing from the entire county population.
7. Because the WENDI program was designed to serve women who represent a cross-section of the community, their needs, interests, and objectives will vary.
8. The attitudes expressed reflect the views of women, ages 25 to 55, who were interested in improving themselves and in career development.
9. All classes received the same structured peer group counseling with a role model facilitator and received similar curriculum treatment.
10. The majority of women entering the WENDI classes indicated low self-confidence on preliminary testing, and literature on reentry programs for women at colleges across the country supports this fact.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses advanced at the outset of the study are the following:

1. After participation in the WENDI program, participants will indicate improvement

a. In their level of self-confidence.

b. In their family relationships.

c. In their relationships with their fellow employees.

d. In their ability to assert themselves and make their own decisions.

2. A majority of the women will

a. Have returned to school since taking WENDI.

b. Be working.

c. Indicate they have positive feelings about themselves.

3. A significant number of women will be single heads of households supporting children as compared to married working women with children.

Significance of the Problem

Women comprise half the population in the United States. More than half of all American women are in the work force today. Of ten million new jobs created between 1975 and 1978, four million went to women. Women fill forty percent of all jobs in the nation,[1] and the size of the female labor force has doubled since 1957.[2] In the period 1953-1979 the proportion of married women who worked went from 26 to 49 percent, and the proportion of working women with school-age children rose from 32 to 59 percent.[3]

However, women are flooding into the labor force, not as the result of a temporary crisis, as in World War II, but as the result of

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[1] Statistical Abstract of the United States. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. (Washington, D.C., 1979) 28, 396.

[2] Handbook of Labor Statistics. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December, 1980), p. 7-8.

[3] Social Indicators III: Selected Data on Social Conditions and Trends in the United States. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December, 1980), p. 311.

powerful changes taking place in American life. Male-female relationships, traditional sex roles, and social attitudes and behavior have been undergoing dramatic changes.

Women have always contributed to the economy of the nation. In addition to caring for the home and family, they have produced goods at home to sell in the market place, particularly in earlier periods of American history. The difference in this century is that women have gone outside the home to work. In this industrial society, a paycheck is recognition. As Ralph Smith states in "The Movement of Women into the Labor Force," "The economic power provided by paid employment enhances the bargaining power of an individual in the marketplace, the political arena, and the home."[4] Working women make significant contributions to the level of the economy. They not only work; they bring in income, and they spend significant amounts of income.

Women are motivated to move into the labor force by a number of factors. Families have become smaller, and there are more conveniences for housekeeping. Women are becoming better educated and want to use their skills in the job market. Marriage is no longer a dependable basis for economic security. Women cannot risk being left without earning capacity, as countless thousands of displaced homemakers have learned. Social values have changed in that a woman who has never been employed is considered unusual. Many women need to work to keep up with family expenses and the effects of inflation. There is a large increase in the number of families headed by women. Women live longer. Women working may be "the single most outstanding phenomenon of our century . . . having primary and secondary consequences greater than those resulting from any other event in this

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[4]Ralph E. Smith, ed., The Subtle Revolution: Women at Work. (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1979), p. 2.

century.[5]

However, most women work because of necessity. Of the 37 million women in the labor force in 1975, 8.5 million were single (never married), 6.9 million were widowed, separated, or divorced, and 9.5 million had husbands who earned less than $10,000 per year, equalling 24.9 million women or 68 percent of the female labor force. The earnings of many of the remaining 32 percent helped families to purchase a home, educate the children, and contribute in other important ways.[6]

Households headed by women constitute one-seventh of all families in the United States, and they include one-half of all families living in poverty. Most of the increase in families living in poverty over the past ten years has been among these families. In 1977 eight million families were headed by women, and one-third had incomes below the poverty level.[7] Unemployment among women who head families was 9.3 percent in 1977, compared with 3.6 percent for married men in families with children.[8]

Forecasts of the growth of working women predict that by 1990 over 55 percent of all women aged sixteen and up will be in the labor force, as compared to forty percent in 1978. One million women per year will enter the work force, and only twenty-five percent of all women will be full-time homemakers.[9]

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[5]Laurie Werner, "Where Are Working Women Now?" Interview with Eli Ginzberg, Chairman of the National Commission for Manpower Policy and Professor of Economics at Columbia University. Working Woman, 3 (December, 1978), 35.

[6]Smith, p. 69.

[7]Ibid., p. 12-13.

[8]Ibid., p. 69.

[9]Ibid., p. 13.

Reentry women often have exceptional organizing skills and common sense used in running their homes and in volunteer activities. But employers can't recognize their skills, and the women lack confidence in their own abilities. In job interviews women are asked questions never asked of men, such as, "Do you intend to get married?" "What will you do if you have children?" "How does your spouse feel about your working?" rather than "We want a five-year commitment from you because it's going to take us that long to train you. Can you give us that?" as would be asked of a man. Women are often afraid to face the possible harassment that is experienced when breaking into traditionally male occupations. Women aren't as aware of the informal methods of participating in office politics which men know are a necessary part of getting ahead on the job.[10]

Women are continuing to crowd into overcrowded traditionally female occupations, causing wages to be depressed.[11] The median incomes of women college graduates in the work force average that of male high school dropouts.[12] Sawhill found the age-earnings profiles of single (never married) women were only one percentage point higher than the profiles for married women, despite the fact that single women had held their jobs for the same length of time as men in the same age bracket. This casts doubt on the premise that women's wages do not equal men's because of women's intermittent work patterns.[13]

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[10]"Women at Work: Still Fighting 'Stereotyped Roles'". Interview with Bernice Sandler, Director, Project on the Status and Education of Women. U.S. News & World Report, 86 (January 15, 1979), p. 74.

[11]Smith, p. 61.

[12]Ibid., p. 44.

[13]Isabel V. Sawhill, "The Economics of Discrimination Against Women: Some New Findings," Journal of Human Resources, 8 (Fall 1973), 383-396. In Smith, p. 38.

Women have tended to underestimate their labor force participation and to have invested in less education and training than their expectations warrant. They have paid less attention to the quality of their education and been less careful about career planning. These factors are due to the focus of education for females as well as attitudes of society regarding women. Our society does not emphasize career planning for girls, and marriage has been viewed as the primary focus for a female to achieve status, rather than in achieving through her own merits.[14]

For these reasons, reentry women have felt largely unprepared to enter the work force and out of touch with working conditions and opportunities. Many women have been full-time homemakers for twenty or thirty years. Either by choice or because of economic necessity, they wish to reenter the job market. As a result, reentry women's programs have formed at colleges across the nation. Their purpose is to prepare women to reenter the work force. A job-readiness program helps reentry women make the transition from home to full-time employment in a variety of occupations.

The WENDI course at Brevard Community College is designed to increase women's self-awareness and self-confidence and to help them establish education and job goals. The immediate response to the program since its first class was announced in 1974 indicates it has met a specific community need, a fact which is consistent with the primary educational objectives of Brevard Community College.

Studies such as this contribute to the general body of knowledge available to those involved in implementing women's reentry programs. This

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[14]Smith, p. 42.

study presents data as to whether the WENDI program is on target. By surveying the women who completed the basic course over three years ago, an analysis of their responses is expected to reveal to some extent the degree of effectiveness of the program, and if it is meeting its primary goals. Other studies have been made in relation to the WENDI program. This study complements their findings.

Laura Woodward, director of the Women's Education Development Incentive program at Brevard Community College in Cocoa, Florida, has provided assistance and cooperation since the outset of the present study. She has expressed a genuine interest in ways through which the results can be used in the WENDI program, especially integration with the industrial and technical divisions of the college, where women can learn non-traditional job skills.

CHAPTER II

RELATED RESEARCH

Traditional Role-Expectations for Women

Much of the research on programs designed to help women enter or reenter the work force has focused on personality factors and the existence of sex-role stereotypes prevalent in society. Traditional sex-role attitudes have expected the female to remain in the home, since her sphere of influence was inside or interior as contrasted to the male role which was outside or exterior. She was expected to be quiet and less aggressive than the dominant and assertive male, deferring to the male in decision-making and intellectual matters.[1]

Historical documents verify this attitude. "The Mayflower Compact" does not carry the signature of any woman. Women were not considered important. The Constitution of the United States contains men's signatures exclusively.[2] There was no intent to confer upon women rights and privileges accorded to equal human beings.

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[1]Janet S. Hyde and B.G. Rosenberg, Half the Human Experience: The Psychology of Women, 2nd ed. (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1976), p. 53.

[2]Documents Illustrative of the Formation of the Union of the American States. House Document No. 398. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1927), p. 1002.

In this century women have endured inferior status. The New York City Board of Education in 1903 disqualified married women from service unless the husband was incapacitated or had deserted his wife, a ruling based presumably on the opinion that a married woman should be supported by her husband and should allow unmarried women to support themselves by teaching.[3] Women did not get the vote until 1920 when the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution was passed. Sex discrimination in public education was not abolished until 1972.[4] At present a constitutional amendment to insure equal rights to women is encountering strong opposition.[5]

The foregoing facts suggest that many of the reentry woman's needs and problems have stemmed from longstanding societal expectations derived from a male-oriented society. Approved occupational roles for women have been limited to wife-mother, nurse, teacher, or clerical worker. Men have had the freedom to choose from a broad selection of occupations. Not all women are fitted to be wives or mothers, yet all have been expected to conform to these roles. Awareness of such occupational disparity has been growing.

Cultural norms which have become functionally inappropriate to the social needs of the present are a developmental lag characteristic of rapidly changing social conditions. The reentry woman,

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[3]Quoted by the Educational Review (1903), XXV, 213-14. In Thomas Woody, A History of Women's Education in the United States. 2 vols. (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Science Press, 1929), p. 509.

[4]Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

[5]Proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the federal constitution.

one who has worked at home for a number of years and who now wishes to reenter school or special training programs to prepare for a career, has suffered from discriminations inherent in these cultural lags.[6]

Identity Formation in Women

Hyde and Rosenberg observed that the search for identity is a fundamental part of adolescent preparation for adulthood. For the male, this process centered on developing skills needed for a particular occupation. For the female, it was defined as expectancy to fill the role of wife-mother. The adolescent girl did not see preparation for a job or career as an important factor in the development of her identity, nor did she perceive that future work outside the home would be a major source of identity for her. While the male was actively forming an adult identity in his late teens, the female was postponing formation of her identity in order to remain flexible to adapt to her future husband's situation and needs.[7]

Women tended to move through adulthood finding their identity through others, chiefly husband and children. When children left the home, the woman lost the major source that had sustained her for most of her life. As a result, the process of forming a unique identity in females was frequently postponed.[8] Hyde and Rosenberg stressed the importance of recognizing the impact of late-occurring experiences

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[6]Helen S. Farmer, "Helping Women to Resolve the Home-Career Conflict," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 49 (1971), 800.

[7]Hyde and Rosenberg, p. 70.

[8]Ibid., p. 71-72.

in the development of female identity and personality, in contrast to the traditional focus on infancy and early childhood as prime formulants of personality. The total approach should give equal attention to not only infancy and childhood, but also adolescence, adulthood, and old age.[9]

Lopata, in her eleven-year study of women at home, observed that the frequent pattern of moving from dependency in the parental home to dependency in marriage, without ever experiencing independence and self-sufficiency, was another factor causing postponement of identity-formation in women. Lopata's studies indicated that "lack of crystallization" in women at home resulted in feelings of depression, and fear of taking risks or making decisions.

> Fear of societal criticism is more strongly built into the socialization of girls than of boys, who are encouraged to experiment with life plans and to take the initiative.[10]

Komarovsky conducted a study of women college seniors to determine the effects of the conflict between cultural mores of femininity and intellectual achievement. She defined these roles as the "feminine" role and the "modern" role, indicating each role excluded the other, even though both were always present in the female's environment. Results showed that forty percent of the college women admitted some difficulties in personal relations with men due to conflicting sex roles, but sixty percent said they had no such

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[9]Hyde and Rosenberg, p. 78.

[10]Helena Z. Lopata, Occupation Housewife (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 371-72.

problems, and 26 percent were troubled by a sudden reversal of parental expectations based on the parents' fear that their modern, achieving daughters would be perceived as unmarriageable by their male peers. Komarovsky's findings are significant in explaining why young women excelled through their high school years and then declined in achievement in their college years. Results of her study indicate that societal expectations tended to inhibit the natural abilities and inclinations of college women to achieve.[11]

Rosenberg and Hyde in suggesting an explanation for this reversal of roles, proposed that although boys and girls behaved quite similarly in childhood, they were absorbing from significant adults different sorts of knowledge about sex-appropriate behavior that they were not likely to use until ten or fifteen years later.[12]

Internal Barriers That Inhibit Reentry Women

DiSabatino explained that even without the external sex-role discriminatory factors that hold women back in the working world, internal barriers exist which inhibit women's occupational advancement and which are even more detrimental to women's entry into managerial or non-traditional male occupations. Some of these psychological factors are fear of failure, low self-esteem, role conflict, and

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[11] Mirra Komarovsky, "Cultural Contradictions and Sex Roles," American Journal of Sociology, 52 (1946), 184, 186.

[12] B. G. Rosenberg and Janet S. Hyde, "Female Sex Role Development," Paper presented at American Psychological Association, Montreal, August 1973. In Hyde and Rosenberg, p. 65.

perceived consequences for pursuing achievement.[13] Baruch's research reveals women have needed more female role models to observe who are successfully combining the roles of marriage and career.[14] DiSabatino sums up the barriers women face:

> Only when societal sex-role stereotypes and attitudes toward competence and achievement in women can be changed and when women can begin to overcome their own inner inhibitions created by their conditioning will women have a genuine freedom to choose roles and to express their full potential through occupational choice.[15]

Broverman conducted studies that revealed how deeply ingrained sex-role attitudes have been in our society.[16] He and his associates constructed their own sex-role questionnaire based on sex-role perceptions current at that time, rather than using an instrument based on traditional notions of sex-appropriate behaviors. One hundred undergraduate men and women psychology students listed characteristics, attributes, and behaviors on which they believed men and women differed. All items that occurred at least twice were included

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[13] Marie DiSabatino, "Psychological Factors Inhibiting Women's Occupational Aspirations and Vocational Choices: Implications for Counseling," Vocational Guidance Quarterly, (September, 1976), 48. (A computerized search of ERIC documents and the CIJE by the data librarian at Stetson University yielded 38 abstracts relative to the reentry of women into the work force. Representative of these are studies by DiSabatino, Harmon, Farmer, and King and Elledge-Heimer.)

[14] Grace K. Baruck, "Maternal Influences Upon College Women's Attitudes Toward Women and Work," Developmental Psychology, 6 (1972), 33.

[15] DiSabatino, p. 48.

[16] I.K. Broverman, S.R. Vogel, D.M. Broverman, F.E. Clarkson, and P.S. Rosenkrantz, "Sex-Role Stereotypes: A Current Appraisal," Journal of Social Issues, 28 (1972), 61.

on the questionnaire (122). Subjects who took the sex-role inventory indicated the extent to which each item described an adult man (masculine response), an adult woman (feminine response), and themselves (self response). The scored responses were for 74 college men and 80 college women. Items on which at least 75 percent agreement existed among respondents of each sex were termed "stereotypic". Forty-one items met this standard.[17]

Six groups totaling 599 men and 383 women, married and single, ages 17-60, took the questionnaire. Results revealed that sex-role stereotypes are clearly defined for men and women. Subjects perceived women as less competent, less independent, less objective, and less logical than men. Masculine characteristics were preferred to feminine traits. Both sexes incorporated both the positive and the negative characteristics of their sex stereotypes into their own self-concepts. Since female traits were more negatively valued than masculine traits, women tended to have more negative self-concepts than men. Women's negative self-concepts reflected the powerful social pressures of sex stereotyping.

Further research revealed that college students regarded the ideal woman as less competent than the ideal man, and that mental health practitioners regarded mature healthy women as more submissive and less independent than either mature healthy men, or adults. This revealed that different standards existed for women than for adults![18]

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[17] Broverman, p. 62

[18] Ibid., p. 75.

In her research on sex differences in achievement motivation Horner determined that females who were motivated to achieve felt they were defying societal expectations of what females "should" do, and as a result paid a high price in anxiety. She found that women consistently had higher test anxiety scores than men, and that women did not perform well when competing against others, particularly when competing against men. Women worried about achieving success at the price of losing their femininity, and at the same time they worried about failing to measure up to their own standards of achievement. Horner defined this psychological double bind as "the motive to avoid success," a concept acquired early in life along with other sex-role standards.[19]

Margaret Mead identified women's fear of success thirty years ago when she wrote that "each step forward in work as a successful American regardless of sex means a step back as a woman . . . "[20] Social mores viewed femininity and competitive achievement as mutually exclusive.

Another internal barrier to achievement in women has been a general tendency to attribute success to external sources rather than to internal sources. Feather pre-and post-rated subjects who took a ten-item Anagrams Test. Before the test the subjects rated how confi-

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[19]Matina S. Horner, "Fail: Bright Women," Psychology Today, 3 (1969), 36.

[20]Margaret Mead, Male and Female: A Study of Sexes in a Changing World (New York: Morrow, 1949), p. 303.

dent they were that they could solve half or more of the anagrams. After determining their scores, they recorded the degree to which they felt their scores were due to ability or luck, and their degree of satisfaction with their scores. Feather proposed that a person's estimate of his own ability was an important determinant of his expectation of success on any given occasion. Results of his study revealed that females were lower in initial confidence, higher in external attribution, and higher in feelings of inadequacy than were males. Women tended to attribute their success to luck or to claiming the task was an easy one, rather than to their own ability or hard work, thus depriving themselves of the rewards and satisfactions of achievement.[21]

The Effects of Internal Barriers on Reentry Women's Occupational Experience

The result of women's lack of confidence in their skills, lesser degree of independence, and lower self-esteem has been that women were more vulnerable to fear of failure than men. When traditionally male occupations became available to women through the passage of equal opportunity laws,[22] they were likely to choose less

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[21] N.T. Feather, "Attribution of Responsibility and Valence of Success and Failure in Relation to Initial Confidence and Task Performance," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 13 (1969), 130.

[22] "The Equal Pay Act of 1963 prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of sex in paying wages. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, prohibits discrimination in all aspects of employment, including hiring, firing, promotions, training, fringe benefits, seniority, and retirement, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. A 1967 Executive Order requires that federal contractors, who include the largest business firms in the nation, undertake affirmative action to improve the employment opportunities of women. Title IX of the Education

important and less satisfying occupations because of their inner inhibitions.[23] This accounts in part for the fact that the majority of working women have held the lowest paying jobs, and their median earnings for year-round, full time work have been only fifty-nine cents to every dollar earned by men.[24]

> Women's occupational status is very different from that of men. While in 1975 they comprised 40 percent of the labor force, they were 99 percent of all secretaries; 98 percent of all household workers and nurses; 96 percent of dressmakers, sewers and stitchers; 85 percent of all elementary schoolteachers; 77 percent of all those in clerical occupations; and 58 percent of all nonhousehold related service employees. About three-quarters of all women workers were in these occupations . . .[25]

Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities receiving federal assistance . . the Age Discrimination in Employment Act bars job discrimination against persons between the ages of 40 and 70, except where age is 'a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the particular business'." Alice M. Yohalem, ed., Women Returning to Work: Policies and Progress in Five Countries (Montclair, New Jersey: Allanheld, Osmun & Co. Publishers, Inc., 1980), p. 246.

[23] DiSabatino, p. 44.

[24] Mary Dublin Keyserling (Director of Women's Bureau, Department of Labor, 1964-1969), "Women's Stake in Full Employment: Their Disadvantaged Role in the Economy - Challenges to Action," American Women Workers in a Full Employment Economy: A Compendium of Papers Submitted to the Subcommittee on Economic Growth and Stabilization of the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States (September 15, 1977) U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., p. 75.

[25] Ibid.

Vocational Theories As Applied to Reentry Women

A study by Putnam and Hansen investigated the relationship of the feminine role and self-concept to vocational maturity. Results from the analysis of data from Rand's Feminine Role Rating Inventory, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, Crite's Vocational Development Inventory, and a personal data form demonstrated that the self-concept of the feminine role was significantly connected with vocational maturity in women. The higher the level of self-esteem, the higher the level of vocational maturity. Correspondingly, women's low estimations of their own competence caused them to be vocationally immature and to choose from a narrow range of occupational choices.[26]

Putnam and Hansen's study supported Super's theory of vocational development. Super viewed the individual as moving through a series of life stages, each of which was characterized by a different vocational developmental task that caused the individual to experience certain vocational behaviors. The individual's final vocational choice reflected this self-concept, since vocational development was the implementation of the self-concept.[27] In light of Super's theory, a woman's vocational choice was synonymous with her self-concept.

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[26]Barbara A. Putnam and James C. Hansen, "Relationship of Self-Concept and Feminine Role Concept to Vocational Maturity in Young Women," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 19 (1972), 436.

[27]Donald E. Super, "Education and the Nature of Occupations and Careers," Teachers College Record, 58 (March 1957), 306.

> ... an occupational aspiration can be defined as a self-concept, as the individual's translation of his picture of himself into occupational or social role terms. How effectively he makes this translation may be expected to be a major determinant of life satisfaction.[28]

Super stated that more people employed in the higher occupational levels were satisfied with their work than were people at the lower levels.[29] He suggested that improvement in vocational adjustment could lead to improvement in other aspects of adjustment, by relieving tensions, clarifying feelings, giving insight, helping persons attain success, and developing a feeling of competence in an important area of adjustment, the vocational.[30]

Farmer states that the career motivation models advanced by Super (developmental), Holland (personality), Hollingshead (sociological), and Krumboltz (social learning), though useful, did not take into account the social learning differences experienced by girls and women as compared to men.[31] Her study investigated the relationship between home-career conflict, fear of success, achievement, and career motivation for women of differing sex role orientations. She also obtained measures of self-esteem, risk-taking, perceived commu-

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[28]Super, p. 306

[29]Donald E. Super, The Psychology of Careers, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 269.

[30]Donald E. Super, "Personality Integration Through Vocational Counseling," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 2 (1955), 270.

[31]Helen S. Farmer, "The Relationship of Home-Career Conflict, Fear of Success, and Sex-Role Orientation to Achievement and Career Motivation Given Different Levels of Perceived Environmental Support," (ERIC Document ED 154 294), 1977, 2.

nity support, and early socialization. Results confirmed that community support, community discrimination, self-esteem in relation to home and family, and early socialization experiences were important predictors of high or low career motivation in women. Fear of success and home-career conflict were most severe among highly motivated women. Female subjects were 53 continuing education and 109 college undergraduates. All were married and mothers of children.[32]

Programs for Reentry of Women into the Work Force

Harmon reminded vocational counselors that widowed or divorced reentry women had to have their economic, security, and emotional needs met first, in accordance with Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs,[33] before their internal needs for self-fulfillment could be met in appropriate ways.[34] Vocational counseling could help them find a job right away, and then help them upgrade their skills based on their aptitudes and interests. Women moved from a state of economic helplessness and dependency to learning how to provide for themselves. Reentry programs for women in continuing education provided the support services which enabled women to move through this transition process.[35]

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[32]Farmer, p. 5.

[33]A. H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 35.

[34]Lenore W. Harmon, "The Guidance Needs of Women" (ERIC Document ED 173 539), 1979, 6.

[35]Helen S. Farmer and Thomas E. Backer, "Women at Work: A Counselor's Sourcebook" (ERIC Document ED 127 521), February, 1975, 163, 229.

> Over 300 community colleges have established reentry programs since 1970, serving women, minorities, and older students. Enrollment by persons aged 35 and older increased 30 percent between 1974 and 1976. In 1974 fifty-eight percent of all undergraduates ages 35 and older were enrolled in two-year colleges. Women comprise half of full-time student populations, and over half of part-time students in two-year colleges.
>
> The most productive community college reentry programs have an orientation period which provides extensive exposure to models in non-traditional areas, and labor market information indicating local demand occupations. They offer job search assistance for women deemed ready for employment and, for those who are not job ready, encourage enrollment in programs of occupational training directed toward meeting job requirements in well-paid fields where local opportunities are plentiful. Some programs maintain close ties with employers who commit themselves to employ qualified graduates.[36]

A study by Richards stressed the psychological and practical needs of women reentering the community college, and criticized the community college for its insensitivity to the special needs of reentry women. The study recommended that colleges provide supportive services, such as, child care, financial aid, and personal and career counseling, to offset the pervasive sexism that has conditioned women to see themselves as inferior human beings. Higher education of unemployed and underemployed women could gradually change the condition of the majority of working women who had worked in the lowest-paying, mostly operative and clerical, occupations. "Low earnings affect the self-image and aspirations of women and perpetuate the concept of inferiority."[37]

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[36] Yohalem, p. 269-70.

[37] Lillian S. Richards, "Women's Perception of Their Psychological and Practical Needs Upon Reentry to a Community College: Implications for Restructuring the Learning Environment." (ERIC Document ED 130 713), July, 1976, 6.

Meeting the Reentry Woman's Need For an Improved Self-Concept

Elledge studied the effects of structured peer group counseling on the self-concept of the adult reentry woman. Results of the study revealed that peer group support enhanced a woman's self-esteem, and was an important factor in her success in reentering school or work. Self-concept needs produced a direct effect on motivation, success, and future achievement in education. Elledge developed a set of guidelines for peer group counseling in the community college based on a study of its use in reentry and continuing education programs for women.[38]

The Development Team of the college indicated that improved peer group counseling as developed in the women's reentry program could be transferred to other areas of the college, such as, training women in the non-traditional, vocational-technical areas of the Industrial Division, and in conjunction with study skills courses conducted for "high risk" students of both sexes in the Career Development Center.[39]

Roueche and Mink defined "high risk" students as persons who had a history of failures, and little or no sense of control and self-direction in their lives.[40] They developed a method to teach students

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[38]Muriel Kay Elledge, "The Development of Guidelines for Community College Peer Group Counseling Evolving From a Study of Programs for Adult Re-Entry Women." Ed.D. dissertation, Nova University, 1978, 1978, 79.

[39]Ibid., p. 69.

[40]J. E. Roueche and O. G. Mink, Locus of Control and Success Expectancy, (Manchaca, Texas: Sterling Swift, 1976), p. 1.

to take more control of their lives and expect success rather than failure, by helping them learn to develop an internal locus of control orientation, a concept developed from Rotter's Social Learning Theory. Locus of control was expressed on a continuum ranging from the external, one who believed consequences were caused by agents outside himself and who failed to perceive his experience as directly connected to his behavior, to the internal, one who recognized causal relationships between his own behavior and the social reinforcements he received. Pilot studies conducted over a three year period at Pennsylvania State University beginning in 1968 revealed that external individuals required the impact of group involvement, confrontation, and support to maximize social learning.[41] Elledge determined that reentry women, one high risk student group, responded to locus of control and success expectancy as taught in group counseling. Women gained a greater sense of control over their lives, and increased in self-confidence.[42]

Reentry Program Results

Rice and Goering conducted a study of two Career and Decision-making Workshop classes, using initial and six-month and ten-month self-report follow-up evaluations, to investigate attitudinal and behavioral changes in reentry women. Three objectives were evaluated: how participants restructured their time in order to implement their career and other lifetime goals by entering classes, the work force, or volunteer work; to what degree participants increased in self-esteem, as seen in planning more for themselves and less for suiting others; and to what degree methods of decision-making learned in the workshop had been util-

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[41] Roueche and Mink, p. 49.

[42] Elledge, p. 53.

ized. Results indicated: over three-fourths of the women made major changes in activity, and over one-half returned to classes; nearly 30 percent had increased in self-confidence and assertiveness in considering themselves when structuring their time and activities; and 84 percent had used workshop decision-making information when deciding to return to school or work, or deciding not to work or not to leave a marriage. The practical results of the workshop indicate that "a single in-depth workshop experience can be quite effective," particularly for women in transition.[43]

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[43]Joy K. Rice and Margaret L. Goering, "'Women in Transition': A Life-Planning Workshop Model," National Association of Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors, 40 (Winter 1977), 60.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES USED IN THE COLLECTION OF DATA

Developing the Instrument

In developing the questionnaire, the purpose was to produce an instrument to determine the attitudes and subsequent experiences of women who had participated in a reentry course more than three years ago. Travers comments on such an attempt, explaining the complexity of changing deep-seated patterns of behavior. His conclusion:

> There seems to be a weak relationship between beliefs, feelings and related actions. The relationship is sufficiently weak that one cannot assume that action will follow a program that attempts to build up beliefs and feelings related to an attitude, and yet beliefs and feelings are important for the establishment of actions.[1]

Questions for the survey instrument were derived from Continuing Education for Women literature describing the WENDI program, published articles about the program, research studies done on different aspects of the program, staff interviews, related literature, and the writer's own experience as a reentry student in 1977.

A rough draft of preliminary questions was presented to the graduate students taking the course in Research Methods in Education at Stetson University to test its wording and clarity. Interviews were held with the WENDI coordinator and the WENDI counselor to explore preliminary questionnaire items to ensure that the focus of the instrument would be on target. Four basic factors to probe were

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[1]Robert M. W. Travers, An Introduction to Educational Research, 4th ed. (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1978), p. 185.

established. They were: Did the participant develop increased self-confidence as a result of the reentry class? Did she learn to set reachable goals for herself in education, job-training, or work? Did she return to school or job training after WENDI? Did she go to work after WENDI and is she working now? These factors combined with demographic questions comprised the questionnaire.

Following this, a study was made of the WENDI class evaluations given by each participant at the conclusion of each class three years ago. Those aspects located in the class folders in the WENDI office that related to the value of the program to the individual were included in the questionnaire. The particular features selected centered on the four main components of the survey as previously established by the program coordinator and counselor.

The questionnaire was then pilot-tested on members of the WENDI staff, half of whom had taken the reentry course before becoming staff members later on. Interviews to assess the questionnaire were held with the program coordinator, the WENDI counselor, and a teaching staff member. The instrument was then mailed to WENDI instructors in the north and south ends of the county, explaining its intent and requesting critical response. Suggestions given, based on insight and experience, were incorporated into the final revision.

The questionnaire items were arranged inside a single-fold brochure with a letter explaining the purpose of the survey on the front page and lined space reserved for answers to open-ended questions on the back. This typed format was presented to a typesetter in Cocoa Beach who further refined its layout before it was given to the printer. The questionnaire may be seen in Appendix A.

The Research Population

The research population was made up of women who had completed the Women's Educational Development Incentive (WENDI) class at Brevard Community College in Cocoa, Florida, in 1977. Nine classes were surveyed comprising a total of 158 women. The course was offered under the Department of Continuing Education for Women.

Originally the research population was intended to include every woman who completed the WENDI course in 1977. However, when it became evident that half the population would be CETA-funded participants who were paid to participate, the decision was made to include only those who voluntarily enrolled in the program. Thus, only non-CETA participants were included in the sample.

Each participant had attended one of the WENDI classes in the north, central, and south areas of Brevard County held during the winter, spring or fall of 1977. The research population represented women of different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds, most of whom were in the thirty-five to fifty-five age group.[2]

Distribution of the Instrument

Questionnaires were mailed to a random sampling of the nine WENDI classes. The respondents were not required to identify themselves. The letter accompanying the questionnaire assured the respondents that all information would be held in strict confidence. However, a separate slip was enclosed with each questionnaire which politely requested the

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[2]Maxwell C. King and Muriel Kay Elledge-Heimer, "Dynamics of Community College Women's Programming," New Directions for Community Colleges, 27 (1979), 81.

respondent's signature so she would not receive follow-up notices. In every case, respondents signed this slip. The letter and signature slip are included in Appendices B and C.

Seventy-nine questionnaires were mailed to the sample who enrolled in the three branches of Brevard Community College. Thirty were returned by the post office because the recipients had moved and left no forwarding address. Based on the assumption that 49 were received, the 36 questionnaires returned represented a response of 73 percent. Three of the 36 returns were not usable because only the signature slips had been signed.

The distribution of answered questionnaires was as follows: seventeen questionnaires were received from the original mailing sent out on March 24, 1981. Follow-up postcards were sent three weeks later. Only four responses resulted. One week later a follow-up letter was sent which yielded ten responses. Two weeks later phone calls were made to the remaining fifteen non-respondents. Seven had moved, four had no phone listings, and four women promised to return their questionnaires. Two were received, making a total of 33 answered questionnaires. The follow-up postcard and letter are presented in Appendices D and E.

Compilation of Data

Questions and sub-questions on the survey instrument constituted 39 variables. Each variable was recorded on a code sheet in accordance with the designated ordinal data for each question for each of the 33 cases. Responses to open-ended questions were tabulated and divided into appropriate categories for descriptive analysis.

The raw data were summarized and analyzed through an SPSS program (Statistical Program for the Social Sciences). The descriptive statistics yielded from the SPSS analysis provided the information for the collective attitudes presented in the following chapters. To test the hypotheses, some of the categories within the various questions were combined to meet the basic criterion for the validity of the chi square statistic. The chi square data were computed using the Minitab program. The Minitab was used because the SPSS would be more costly, would involve more time, and be more subject to error, since all the variables on the questionnaire would have to be recoded.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The information supplied by responses to the questionnaire is discussed in this chapter. The tables and discussion do not necessarily follow the order in which the questions appear on the survey instrument.

Personal Characteristics of WENDI Women

TABLE I

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WENDI WOMEN WHO RESPONDED TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Marital Status	N	%	Highest Grade Completed in School	N	%	Age	N	%	Marital Change Since WENDI	N	%
Single	0	0	Eighth	0	0	Under 25	1	3.0	No Change	25	75.8
Married	20	60.6	Tenth	3	9.1	25-29	3	9.1	Married	3	9.1
Divorced	9	27.3	High School	15	45.5	30-39	7	21.2	Divorced	4	12.1
Separated	0	0	2 Years College	7	21.2	40-49	9	27.3	Separated	0	0
Widowed	4	12.1	4 Years College	8	24.2	50 and over	13	39.4	Widowed	1	3.0

Race or Ethnic Group: N 33 100% White

This table indicates that sixty percent of the women are married. The next largest group, twenty-seven percent, are divorced, and 12 percent

are widowed. Forty percent of the sample population are unmarried. None of the women has completed fewer than ten years of schooling, and nearly half are high school graduates. Almost a fourth have completed college and one-fifth have finished two years of college. All respondents indicate they are white. Two-thirds of the women are ages forty to over fifty, and one third are ages 20-39. The largest group are fifty and over, and the second largest group is 40-49. Over three-fourths of the women indicate there has been no change in their marital status since WENDI. Twelve percent have experienced divorce, nine percent have married, and three percent have been widowed since completing the reentry course three years ago.

Self-Confidence of WENDI Participants

TABLE II

DEGREE OF SELF-CONFIDENCE OF WENDI PARTICIPANTS

	Very High		Moderate		Slight		Very Low		No Response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
When you began WENDI	5	15.2	9	27.3	7	21.2	11	33.3	1	3.0
After you finished WENDI	15	45.5	12	36.4	4	12.1	1	3.0	1	3.0
Today, three years later	21	63.6	9	27.3	1	3.0	1	3.0	1	3.0

Table II indicates that over half the women remembered their self-confidence as being very low or slight when they began WENDI three years earlier. Since self-confidence was a prime factor to be dealt with at the outset of every WENDI class, a 42 percent self-rated degree of moderate to

very high self-confidence at the beginning of the reentry class may be presumed to be unusually high.

After completing WENDI, 82 percent of the women rated themselves as having a very high or moderate degree of self-confidence, and presently over 90 percent perceive themselves as moderately or very self-confident. Very high self-confidence increased from 15.2 percent to 63.7 percent, whereas moderate self-confidence increased to 36.4 percent and then returned to exactly what it was in the beginning, 27.3 percent. The degrees of slight and very low self-confidence both decreased significantly to only three percent.

The statistical tool used to determine the compatibility of the participants' degree of self-confidence when they began WENDI with their degree of self-confidence three years later was the chi-square test. The treatment of the data revealed a chi-square of 22.65 with two degrees of freedom and a P less than .001.

Single Head of Household Supporting Dependents

Twenty-seven percent of the women who responded indicated they are single heads of households supporting dependents. This comprises over one-fourth of the sample population, as contrasted to the Department of Labor's statistical data which indicate the number of female family householders with one or more children under age eighteen was 17.4 percent of all families in 1979.[1] Two-thirds of the single heads of households in the sample population are divorced, and one-third are widowed. United States Census Bureau figures for 1979 reveal 38.8 percent of female family householders were divorced, and 32 percent were widowed.[2]

Table III summarizes the distribution of women and their dependents in the survey population. Nineteen women have dependents, and all work. All dependents but one are children. Thirty-six percent

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[1] Statistical Abstract of the United States, p. 51. Figures used are for white female family householders, since the total sample population is white. Figures for black families are more severe.

[2] Ibid.

of the women who responded have no dependents, indicating children have grown up and left home, since 39.4 percent of the sample population are age fifty and over, and 27.3 percent are ages 40-49. Nearly forty percent of the working mothers have two or three dependents in each family. One single working woman has four dependent children; another supports her mother.

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN WITH DEPENDENTS IN SURVEY POPULATION

Number of Women	Number of Children Supported	Number of Other Dependents	Total Number of Children	Percent of Women in Sample Population
13	0	1	0	39.4
4	1	0	4	12.1
7	2	0	14	21.2
6	3	0	18	18.2
1	4	0	4	3.0
2	No Response	0	0	6.1
Total 33		1	40	100.0

Table IV compares the number of single female family heads supporting dependents[3] to the number of two-parent families supporting dependents in the sample population. The number of women in the survey who are single heads of households is significantly similar to the number of married working

[3] With dependents age 18 or under. Statistical Abstract of the United States, p. 51.

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF SINGLE FEMALE FAMILY HEADS SUPPORTING DEPENDENTS COMPARED TO NUMBER OF TWO-PARENT FAMILIES SUPPORTING DEPENDENTS

	Number of Working Women Supporting Dependents	Number of Children Supported	Number of Other Dependents	Total Number of Dependents	Percent of Women Supporting Dependents in Total Popula.
Number of Single Female Family Heads	9	18	1	19	27.3
Number of Married Working Women	10	21	0	21	30.3
Total	19	39	1	40	57.6

mothers. Also, the number of dependents supported by single women is nearly as many as the number of dependents supported by married working women, or two-parent families.

These results support the hypothesis that a significant number of women in the survey population will be single heads of households supporting children as compared to married working women with children. The changing economic and social status of women has contributed to higher divorce and separation rates. Over one-fourth of the women in the survey who responded are divorced. As the divorce rate in the nation has risen, so has the number of female-headed families. From 1965 to 1975 female-headed families with children grew almost ten times as fast as two-parent families. In 1975 one out of every seven children in the United States lived in a female-headed family. Half of these families lived in poverty and half spent some time on welfare.[4] In the 25-44 age group, single-parent families headed by women had only half the income, on the average, of

[4]Heather L. Ross and Isabel V. Sawhill. Time of Transition: The Growth of Families Headed by Women. (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1975), p.1,2.

single-parent families headed by men. Single-parent women face the most severe economic handicaps.[5] Ross and Sawhill state that in 1975 the poverty population was coming increasingly to be dominated by female-headed families.[6] Women need programs that improve their earnings and prepare them for economic independence.

The traditional jobs that women work at are much lower paying than are traditional occupations for men.[7] Women have a more intermittent work record than men because of family responsibilities not yet equally shared by men, either in the home or by providing dependable and sufficient child support. Women frequently end up handling two fulltime jobs, one at work and one at home. Day care facilities, after-school programs, or subsidization of informal child care arrangements can help women accomplish more continuous employment, which will improve women's wages and social security benefits.[8] In the transition to a new division of responsibility between men and women, women and children are the ones most vulnerable and the ones who suffer most.

Table V indicates that two-thirds of the single female family heads have a high school education. In most cases, these women do not have the training or qualifications for jobs that pay salaries sufficient to support a family adequately. In contrast, half the married working mothers have completed two years of college, and 30 percent have completed four years of college, and their salaries are added to their husbands' salaries to provide adequate family income.

Almost half the single female family heads are ages 30 to 39, and the next largest group is age 50 and over. In contrast, half the married working

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[5] Ibid., p. 10.

[6] Ibid., p. 3.

[7] Isabel Sawhill. "Economic Dimensions of Occupational Segregation: Discrimination and Poverty Among Women Who Head Families." Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 1 (1976), 209.

[8] Ross and Sawhill, p. 173-4

mothers are ages 40 to 49. The median age of the female family householder in 1979 was 43.7, down from 50.4 in 1970 and 52.2 in 1960.[9] 42.6 in this study.

TABLE V

EDUCATION AND AGE CHARACTERISTICS
OF WOMEN WHO ARE SINGLE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTING DEPENDENTS
COMPARED TO MARRIED WORKING WOMEN WITH CHILDREN

	Number of Women		Grade Level Completed				Age Group			
			10	12	14	16+	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Single Female Family Heads	9	N	1	6	1	1	2	4	0	3
		%	11.1	66.7	11.1	11.1	22.2	44.4	0	33.3
Married Working Mothers	10	N	0	2	5	3	1	2	5	2
		%	0	20	50	30	10	20	50	20

Career Development Needs of the Women

Table VI indicates the degree of motivation the reentry participants felt after completing WENDI, and the degree to which they were able to set goals for themselves. "Had definite plans" indicates high motivation and clear-cut goals, and a feeling of being able to be self-assertive and make decisions independently. "If I could work it out with my family" reveals less assertiveness and independent decision-making and lower motivation, though the goal may still be clear. "I was thinking about it" indicates low motivation, unclear goals, and the need for a strong support system. "Hadn't thought about it" indicates that particular goal is not important to the individual at this time and is not being seriously considered.

[9] Statistical Abstract of the United States, p. 51.

TABLE VI

MOTIVATION AND GOAL-SETTING AFTER WENDI

WHEN YOU FINISHED THE WENDI CLASS, HOW MUCH DID YOU WANT TO DO THE FOLLOWING?

	Had Definite Plans		If I Could Work It Out With My Family		I Was Thinking About It		Hadn't Thought About It		No Response		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Total
Return to School	6	18.2	3	9.1	15	45.5	3	9.1	6	18.2	33
Return to Work	16	48.5	5	15.2	7	21.2	2	6.1	3	9.1	33
Choose a Different Career Field	6	18.2	0	0	11	33.3	8	24.2	8	24.2	33
Become a Different Sort of Person	10	30.3	1	3.0	7	21.2	7	21.2	8	24.2	33
Make Things Better at Home	12	36.4	7	21.2	4	12.1	2	6.1	8	24.2	33
Get Involved in Community or Volunteer Activities	7	21.2	2	6.1	6	18.2	12	36.4	6	18.2	33

Table VI shows that almost half the women had definite plans to return to work. Fifteen percent planned to return to work if they could work it out with their families, and 21 percent were thinking about working. Over one-quarter had not thought about working or did not respond.

Over a third of the women wanted to make things better at home. This could indicate a desire to improve the family's financial condition by returning to work, or a desire to improve relationships with the husband or the children or both. One-fifth hoped to improve things at home if family cooperation was obtained. Thus, over half the women wanted to improve the home situation.

Nearly a third of the women wanted to become a different sort of person, indicating a desire to have more positive feelings about themselves and to exercise more control over their lives. One-fifth were thinking about changing the sort of persons they were, whereas one-fifth hadn't thought about it, indicating they did not feel a need to change.

Surprisingly, less than a fifth of the reentry participants had definite plans to return to school, and only nine percent had school plans based on working it out with their families. However, 45 percent were thinking about returning to classes. This low response of women having definite plans to return to school can be attributed to the peculiar difficulties women traditionally struggle with when returning to school, such as, child care, lack of money, lack of transportation, lack of information about courses of study and career planning, fears about their own abilities after being out of school for years, lack of family support and cooperation, and lack of self-esteem. It can also be attributed to the family's greater need for additional income, due to inflation and the high cost of living, which leaves the wife without the choice of returning to school to prepare herself for a better-paying job. And a third reason could be the increasing number of female single heads of households, women who have no choice but to work at the best-paying jobs they can find. All of these factors are cited in the literature on women entering or reentering the work force.

TABLE VII

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RELATING TO EDUCATION GOALS

	Yes	%	No	%	No Response	%	Partly	%	Total
Decided to Return to School After WENDI	13	39.4	19	57.6	1	3.0			33
Are Presently Attending School	6	18.2	26	78.8	1	3.0			33
Would Not Have Returned to School If Had Not Taken WENDI	4	12.1	7	21.2	16	48.5	6	18.2	33
WENDI Helped to Decide What To Study	6	18.2	10	30.3	13	39.4	4	12.1	33
Reached Their Educational Goals	4	12.1	19	57.6	10	30.3			33
Still Studying Toward Their Educational Goals	3	9.1							
Still Hope to Go Back and Finish Their Education	9	27.3							

Responses to questions relating to education goals in Table VII indicate that almost 40 percent of the women intended to return to school after completing the reentry course. Eighteen percent are presently attending school three years later, and eighteen percent stated WENDI helped them decide what to study. Only four women declared they had reached their education goals; three asserted they are continuing to study toward their education goals, and nine asserted they still hope to go back and finish their education.

This low response to educational goals refutes the hypothesis that a majority of the women will have returned to school since taking WENDI. Possible reasons have already been cited in discussion relating to Table VI.

The intent of the question, Were you able to set a realistic career goal for yourself during the WENDI class? was, Did you set a reachable or attainable goal for yourself? Two-thirds of the women responded affirmatively, and nearly a third answered negatively. The responses of the affirmative two-thirds correlate positively with responses to the question, Have you worked in the past three years since taking WENDI? Two-thirds of the women indicated they have worked full-time. Fifteen percent worked part-time, and three percent had not worked.

In response to the question, Did the WENDI class help you get a job? one-fourth of the women felt it was very helpful, over a third found it had been some help, and one quarter stated it did not help them get a job. Do you feel the WENDI class was helpful to you after you became employed? A third of the respondents believed the class had been very helpful on the job, over a fourth said it helped some, and less than a fifth felt it was no help on the job.

When asked How do you feel about the job you now have? almost half the women indicated they like their jobs very much. Less than a fifth like their jobs fairly well, and fifteen percent dislike their jobs.

Effectiveness of the Program In Meeting the Needs of Reentry Women

Results of the survey indicate two-thirds of the women have worked full-time and 15 percent have worked part-time since taking the reentry class. Eighty-two percent are working presently, a fact which supports the hypothesis that a majority of the women will be working. A statistical test of the compatibility of observed with expected frequency of responses to the question Have you worked in the past three years since taking WENDI? revealed a chi-square of 12.98 with two degrees of freedom and a P less than .01. Responses to the question In what kind of business do you work and what do you do? corresponded exactly to the number of responses given to the previous question. The write-in responses revealed that nearly half the women held clerical positions. Occupations held by the other half were distributed among sales, operative, service, and homemaker jobs. See Tables VIII and IX.

TABLE VIII

TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS HELD BY WOMEN IN THE SAMPLE POPULATION

Occupation	Number of Women	Percent of Total Population	Percent of Women Who Responded
Professional, Managerial, Technical	3	9.1	10.3
Clerical	14	42.4	48.3
Sales	1	3.0	3.5
Operative	6	18.2	20.7
Service	3	9.1	10.3
Homemaker	2	6.1	6.9
No Response	4	12.1	Missing
Total	33	100.0	100.0

TABLE IX

TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS HELD BY WOMEN IN THE SAMPLE POPULATION
BY JOB DESCRIPTION

Professional, Managerial, Technical

Area Supervisor/Coordinator
Nurse - operates a Newborn Daycare Service in her home.
Program Director for Special Services for Disadvantaged Students

Clerical

Assistant bookkeeper in law firm
Secretary (2)
Educational aide for handicapped children
Collections
Legal secretary
Government secretary
Engineering aide at Rockwell International Shuttle Operations
Teacher's aide for emotionally handicapped in the primary grades
Clerk-typist for Pan American at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station
Medical lab technician at Wuesthoff Hospital
Senior Project Clerk, Purchasing Department, Harris Corporation
Office manager, executive secretary, realtor
Receptionist-bookkeeper

Sales

Beauty consultant - Mary Kay Cosmetics

Operative

Area coordinator for proof test on Shuttle tiles
Electronic tester of radio and various electronic equipment
TPS mechanic on Shuttle for Rockwell International
Cashier - convenience store
Box-maker
Laundry mat worker

Service

Nurse's assistant
Hostess-cashier at restaurant
Lecturer - Weight Watchers

Homemaker - 2

No Response - 4

Total - 33

Tables VIII and IX confirm Department of Labor statistical data which document the fact that women continue to crowd into the traditional female occupations which are clerical, operative, service, teaching, and nursing. Wages as a result remain low, and will continue so until women are willing to

push into non-traditional occupations and relieve traditional jobs from overcrowding so that wages in them can improve.[10] Also, weekly and hourly earnings of salary and wage workers show a large discrepancy which favors male workers over female workers.[11]

The last question on the survey drew a strong response. In retrospect, if you were the designer of the WENDI program, what would you want it to include? Some of the suggestions given have become part of the reentry course since 1977.

Make the class longer so more time can be spent on important subject areas. Engage a personnel director from a competitive business to speak on conciseness in writing resumes.

Provide more information for college-bound women on what is available in the area.

Spend more time on assertiveness training.

Since WENDI is a job-preparation program, emphasize that skilled jobs are very hard to find. Only unskilled jobs are easier to find.

Bring back graduates of the program to speak to current classes.

Invite more guest speakers, such as, women in business, assertiveness training, women's rights, legal aid, all sources of financial aid for attending college.

Include some on-the-job training or provide a list of potential employers interested in hiring women for a reasonable salary and training them on the job.

Use a better test for job aptitude.

Go more in-depth on careers and how to reach career goals, geared to each individual situation.

Provide counseling for those who wish to pursue finding a job.

Twenty-one percent of the women stated the class covered most areas very well and needed no changes.

Changes in Self-Concept of WENDI Women

Table X expresses degrees of positive changes in self-concept that WENDI

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[10] Sawhill, p. 209.

[11] Handbook of Labor Statistics. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December, 1980), p. 118, 119.

TABLE X

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS EVALUATING THE DEGREE OF POSITIVE CHANGES IN SELF-CONCEPT SINCE TAKING THE WENDI CLASS

Changes Since WENDI	Big Improvement N	%	Moderate Improvement N	%	Total % Improvement	No Improvement N	%	Does Not Apply N	%	No Response N	%
Relationship with husband	9	27.3	5	15.2	*42.5	3	9.1	10	30.3	6	18.2
Relationship with children	11	33.3	10	30.3	63.6	4	12.1	4	12.1	4	12.1
Ability to share learning with family	15	45.5	10	30.3	75.8	2	6.1	1	3.0	5	15.2
Relationship with co-workers	11	33.3	8	24.2	57.5	2	6.1	8	24.2	4	12.1
Feelings of self-confidence	13	39.4	12	36.4	75.8	1	3.0	2	6.1	5	15.2
Ability to accept unchangeable	18	54.5	9	27.3	81.8	3	9.1	0	0	3	9.1
Ability to set realistic goals	10	30.3	13	39.4	69.7	3	9.1	2	6.1	5	15.2
Ability to make decisions	17	51.5	10	30.3	81.8	1	3.0	1	3.0	4	12.1
Ability to make new friends	12	36.4	13	39.4	75.8	3	9.1	2	6.1	3	9.1
Ability to be more assertive	19	57.6	9	27.3	84.9	3	9.1	0	0	2	6.1

*Since only 61 percent of the sample population is married, the total percent of improvement is actually 70 percent.

respondents have experienced since taking the reentry class. The ten variables specified are measures of the individual's self-concept, as applicable. The total percent of improvement in each variable supports the hypothesis that a majority of the women will indicate they have positive feelings about themselves. Six of the self-concept variables show a result in chi-square probability levels of less than .01, .02, or .05. See Table XI.

In regard to enhancement of other family relationships, Table X indicates almost two-thirds of the respondents felt relationships with their children had improved, and 76 percent stated their ability to share personal learning and growing with their families had increased. The latter is supported by a chi-square test of observed and expected frequencies resulting in a X^2 of 10.72 with three degrees of freedom and a P less than .02. See Table XI. These results confirm the hypothesis that WENDI participants will indicate improvement in their family relationships.

Of the 82 percent of the sample population who indicated they work, 70 percent stated there has been improvement in their relationships with co-workers on the job since taking the reentry course. This supports the hypothesis that participants will indicate improvement in their relationships with their fellow employees.

Eighty-eight percent of the total sample stated they have improved in their ability to be more assertive about their own needs and interests. The chi-square test of this self-concept variable yielded a X^2 of 6.60 with two degrees of freedom and a P less than .05, confirming the hypothesis that participants will indicate improvement in their ability to assert themselves. Eighty-four percent of the total sample indicated improvement in their ability to make decisions. A chi-square test yielding a X^2 of 10.72 with three degrees of freedom and a P less than .01 supports this result and the hypothesis that participants will indicate improvement in their ability to make their own decisions.

TABLE XI

CHI-SQUARE TESTS OF COMPATIBILITY OF OBSERVED AND EXPECTED FREQUENCIES OF CHANGES IN SELF-CONCEPT SINCE WENDI BY PARTICIPANTS

Improvement in	Percent of Total Sample Population	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	P
Ability to make decisions	81.8	13.68	3	$< .01$
Ability to share learning with family	75.8	10.72	3	$< .02$
Feelings of self-confidence	75.8	10.39	3	$< .02$
Ability to be more assertive	84.9	6.60	2	$< .05$
Ability to accept unchangeable	81.8	6.11	2	$< .05$
Ability to make new friends	75.8	7.81	3	$\geq .05$
Ability to set realistic goals	69.7	6.71	3	$> .05$
Relationship with co-workers	57.5	3.78	3	$> .20$
Relationship with children	63.6	3.04	3	$> .30$
Relationship with husband	42.5	2.70	3	$> .30$

A WENDI instructor stated, "When a woman can make things better at home, she can do anything."[12] Women, for example, who feel there has been improvement in their abilities to make decisions, to share learning and growing with their families, to express self-confidence, to be more assertive, to accept the unchangeable, and to make new friends tend to experience an improved sense of home, which correlates with the positive response to the earlier question, When you finished WENDI, how much did you want to make things better at home? These women are likely to have enough self-confidence to reenter the working world.

The low response on relationship with husband resulted because only sixty•percent of the sample population are married. A positive response from 14 out of a total of twenty married women in the sample actually represents an improvement of 70 percent. A chi-square test of compatibility between improvement in feelings of self-confidence and improvement in one's relationship with one's husband revealed a chi-square of 9.82 with two degrees of freedom and a P less than .01, indicating that as the wives' feelings of self-confidence and self-acceptance improved, their relationships with their husbands also improved.

Another two-way classification testing ability to accept the unchangeable with WENDI women's self-confidence today resulted in a X^2 of 4.04 with one degree of freedom at the .05 level, indicating the improved degree of self-confidence of WENDI women today is helping them to accept factors in their lives that are unchangeable.

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[12]Interview with Mary Ernst, instructor in the WENDI program.

How WENDI Participants Perceive Themselves Three Years After Completing the Reentry Course

In an open-ended question near the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to evaluate how they perceived themselves three years after completing the WENDI class. The question was, Overall, how are you feeling about yourself as a person now? Are you prospering? Feeling alive and aware? Or are you moving in "boxes"? Wearing blinders (again)? Responses to each of the four sub-questions reveal how the women feel about themselves now.

Prospering refers to work experience or training, and to education or work accomplishments. Responses included the following:

I completed training at Brevard Community College for nurse's assistant.

I need only six hours to finish getting my A.S. degree in computer science at Brevard Community College.

I obtained a job in the type of work I studied for.

I am in the process of making a change, whether to continue school beyond my A.A. degree or get a different job.

I have begun to work toward a definite goal in my job, after working my way through several departments (electronics) and learning on-the-job for the past two and a half years.

Through WENDI I got a co-op job with IBM which gave me on-the-job training in my career field. I worked for Rockwell International at Kennedy Space Center for two years, and now work at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

I am a TPS mechanic on the Shuttle at Kennedy Space Center, working for Rockwell International. I have learned managerial skills on my job, and assertive training in WENDI has been a big help.

I will complete my A.A. and A.S. degrees at Brevard Community College in six to eight hours.

Feeling alive and aware deals with feelings about oneself. Five women stated they felt "alive and aware," even though, stated one, "this has been a very hard year. WENDI turned my life around, and it seems to be sticking with me." Eleven respondents stated they feel good about themselves, their family, and friends. Stated one woman who was timid when she began the class and now has self-confidence, "I took WENDI again. It was the greatest help to me." Four women took the class a second time. Two expressed a desire to take it again, to rebuild their confidence in people and themselves.

One reentry woman asserted she feels more settled, able to cope, and less anxious about her job. Another stated she felt good about her ability to cope in the real world. Four stated they have grown in self-confidence. Two stated they now are willing to attempt new things, and can accept other people better for what they are. Other women declared that WENDI

"gave me the first push"

"took me from a basket case to a productive happy member of the human race"

"made me feel like a person again and able to love people"

"helped me become more assertive"

"made me feel much better about myself as a homemaker. I am never a doormat to my family any more."

"helped me grow in self-confidence. I feel very sure of myself, very alive and ambitious."

Another said she is doing a very worthwhile work in a field completely removed from anything she has ever done. One woman stated she may return to school for a graduate degree. Another, widowed in 1977 and divorced in 1980, states, "There have been dramatic changes during the last four years. The responsibility of total care of the lives of my three children and myself forced me to take steps toward self-improvement, self-awareness, and self-fulfillment rather than depend on another. WENDI was the steppingstone for all my achievements. Our WENDI instructor was a tremendous support to all of us. My family and I are healthy, happy, and actively living each day." Statements by two separate individuals sum up "feeling alive and aware": "It's such a good feeling to feel I have accomplished something" and "Accomplishment and self-confidence go hand in hand."

Moving in "boxes" deals with feelings of being trapped in one's job or situation. Women expressed the following responses:

The salary of my present job is unsatisfactory.

I am dissatisfied with my eight years of working experience because I lack specific job training. Family obligations make it hard to go to school. I want to be trained on the job.

I was recently laid off from my job at Kennedy Space Center. I can't find a job that pays well and has good benefits. Raising three teens is hard. I want a vocation, not just a job. I am looking for work.

My job has lots of stress and not enough money to raise four children. I am divorced.

I am trying to get rehired by Rockwell International, as an inspector instead of a mechanic. I am petrified because I don't think I can do it. I hate dressing like a man and competing with them, but the money is good and so are the benefits. I struggle with comprehension and confidence. My confidence has slid since competing in the job world. Competition with young, bright, pretty girls is too much for me.

I feel trapped by constant care of my 24-year old son mentally disabled by drugs.

The last part of the question, Wearing blinders (again), refers to feelings of confusion about one's personal life and lack of self-confidence.

Some responses given are:

My husband is an alcoholic and is on probation. He has stopped me from doing what I know I'd like to do.

I am still recovering from a divorce in 1977. Maybe I don't want to recover.

I feel less confident now than I did during WENDI, even though I am doing all right in my job as a bookkeeper.

After WENDI I took the nurse's assistant training at B.C.C. and worked in a hospital for three months, and now feel confused again. I did not finish high school.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine the attitudes and present status of women who participated in the Women's Education Development Incentive (WENDI) reentry program at Brevard Community College in Cocoa, Florida, in 1977, a program offered under the Department of Continuing Education for Women.

The study was designed, in cooperation with the WENDI office, to test the following hypotheses: that participants will indicate improvement in their level of self-confidence, in relationships with family and co-workers, and in their ability to be assertive and make decisions; that a majority of the women will have returned to school since taking the reentry course, will be working, and will have positive feelings about themselves; that a number of women will be single heads of households supporting children as compared to married working women with children.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to design an instrument that would elicit the attitudes and subsequent experiences of women who had completed the reentry course three years earlier. Sources researched to compile the questionnaire were WENDI descriptive literature, published articles and research studies on the program, WENDI staff interviews, related literature, and the writer's own experience as a 1977 WENDI student. Questions were pilot-tested on WENDI staff members and in staff interviews.

The 23 questionnaire items were arranged inside a single-fold printed brochure with an explanatory letter on the front. The survey instrument was mailed to a random sampling of 158 women who voluntarily enrolled in the program (as distinguished from paid CETA-participants) representing nine WENDI classes given at the south, central, and north campuses of the college. Thirty-three usable questionnaires were returned from the original mailing of 79. A follow-

up postcard, letter, and phone calls were employed until every member of the sample was accounted for.

Questionnaire items were translated into 39 variables, and the data for each variable were recorded on a statistical coding sheet. The raw data were summarized and analyzed through an SPSS program which yielded descriptive statistics upon which the results of the study are based. Chi-square tests computed on the less costly Minitab program provided additional data with which to test the hypotheses.

Results of the survey data gathered are summarized as follows:

1. The largest number of the reentry women, 39 percent, are age 50 and over; 27 percent are ages 40-49, and 21 percent are ages 30-39. Divorced women comprise 27 percent of the sample; 12 percent are widowed, and the remainder, 60 percent, are married. Marital changes since WENDI include four divorces, three marriages, and one widowed. Forty-five percent of the women are high school graduates; 24 percent have completed four years of college, and 21 percent have finished two years of college. All respondents are white.

2. Reentry women's self-confidence increased 48.4 percent from the time they began the WENDI class to three years later, and lack of self-confidence decreased 30.3 percent in the same period. A chi-square test to assess the compatibility of the self-confidence data yielded a X^2 of 22.65 with two degrees of freedom and a P less than .001.

3. Women who are single heads of households supporting themselves and their dependent children make up 24.2 percent of the sample population, which is 6.8 percent higher than United States Census Bureau figures for 1979. Sixty-three percent are divorced and 27 percent are widowed compared to 1979 Census Bureau figures which show 38.8 percent of female family householders were divorced, and 32 percent were widowed.

4. Fifty-eight percent of the women in the sample have dependents, and all work. Of these women 47.4 percent are single householders who support a total of

18 children age 18 or under and one adult; 52.6 percent are married working mothers with a total of 21 dependents age 18 or under.

5. Two-thirds of the single female householders in the sample have completed a high school education, whereas 80 percent of the married working mothers have completed two or four years of college.

6. The largest number of single female householders, 44.4 percent, is ages 30-39, and none are ages 40-49. The largest number of married working mothers, 50 percent, is ages 40-49.

7. At the completion of the WENDI class 63.7 percent of the reentry women wanted to return to work. Of this number 48.5 percent had definite plans to return to work, and 15 percent wanted to work if they could work it out with their families.

8. At the conclusion of the reentry class 36.4 percent of the women had definite plans to make things better at home, and 21.2 percent intended to improve the home situation if they could work it out with their families.

9. When the WENDI class ended, 30.3 percent of the women had definite plans to become a different sort of person. This goal reflects the program's focus on improving one's self-concept and developing self-confidence.

10. Only 18.2 percent of the participants had definite plans to return to school at the end of the reentry class, and 9.1 percent wanted to return if they could work it out with the family, making a total of 27.3 percent who had a desire to return to school.

11. Two-thirds of the women stated they set reachable career goals for themselves during the reentry class; correspondingly, two-thirds of the women are working fulltime, and 15 percent work part-time.

12. Fifty-eight percent of the women stated the reentry class helped them get a job and it helped them on the job, and 63.6 percent like their jobs.

13. Clerical jobs comprise 51.8 percent of the occupations held by working women in the sample population. Operative jobs are the next largest group, 22.2 percent. Only 9.1 percent of the sample hold professional, managerial, or technical positions.

14. Women were asked to evaluate how much they felt their self-concept had improved since taking WENDI by assessing themselves on ten separate variables. A majority of the women in the sample indicate that positive changes in self-concept have occurred, yielding a mean improvement of 73.7 percent.

Total improvement for each variable as indicated by the respondents on the questionnaire are as follows: ability to be more assertive 84.9 percent; ability to make decisions 81.8 percent; ability to accept the unchangeable 81.8 percent; feelings of self-confidence 75.8 percent; ability to share learning with the family 75.8 percent; ability to make new friends 75.8 percent; relationship with husband 70.0 percent; ability to set realistic goals 69.7 percent; relationship with children 63.6 percent; relationship with co-workers 57.5 percent.

15. Six of the chi-square tests computed on the ten self-concept variables refute the null hypothesis, indicating the probability of difference due to chance is only one to five times out of a hundred. These variables are: ability to make decisions, ability to share learning with the family, feelings of self-confidence, ability to be more assertive, ability to accept the unchangeable, and ability to make new friends.

CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of the data together with related readings led the investigator to the following conclusions:

1. This study was designed to test eight hypotheses. Results of analysis of the data support all but one. Data gathered from questionnaire responses indicate women have improved in their self-confidence, family relationships, co-worker re-

lationships, and ability to be assertive and make decisions. A majority of the women, 82 percent, are working, and indicate they have positive feelings about themselves, 73.7 percent. A significant number of the women, 27.3 percent, are single heads of households supporting children compared to married working women with children, 30.3 percent.

2. The study refutes the hypothesis that a majority of the women will have returned to school since taking WENDI. Only a fourth of the women wanted to return to school at the completion of WENDI, and only 12 percent reached their educational goals. However, 39.4 percent returned to school at some time after the class.

3. In the sample studied, the number of divorced working women supporting dependents, 63.0 percent, is 23.7 percent higher than the 1979 Census Bureau figures. This reflects the following facts. One of every three marriages is predicted to end in divorce today. Divorce accounts for three-fifths of the growth of families headed by women. One-third of female-headed families with dependent children live below the poverty level.

4. The number of single working women supporting themselves and young dependents and the number of dependents they support are strikingly similar to the number of married working women supporting young dependents in two-parent families and the number of dependents they support. The difference in earnings between single female householder families and two-parent families is disturbingly dissimilar, since the majority of working women in the nation work in low-paying occupations, primarily clerical and operative, as is borne out by this study.

5. The median age of the female family householder in the sample is 42.5 years compared to 43.7 years in the 1979 Census Bureau figures. The median age of the reentry woman in the sample is also 42.5 years.

6. Older women need to become aware of the importance of preparing themselves for work. They should expect to work longer than men, because women live

longer. Women need to accumulate uninterrupted working years so they can receive higher social security payments. Women over 65 are one of the poorest groups in the nation.

7. Women who need or want to work, reentry women, have to consider factors that do not generally affect men, such as, child care, transportation, family approval, family support and cooperation in running the home, and lack of self-confidence because of being out of the working world for years.

8. At the end of the WENDI class 57.6 percent of the women wanted to make things better at home. Options for accomplishing this that the WENDI class presents are: returning to work to improve the family's financial condition; improving one's self-concept by learning assertiveness, decision-making, and goal-setting; returning to school to prepare for a better-paying job; learning to communicate one's own feelings and needs so as to improve family relationships.

9. The WENDI class structure utilizes group counseling as a support system and learning vehicle. The group represents a microcosm of the real world against which the individual can try out the new skills she is learning in assertiveness, goal-setting, decision-making, and communicating.

10. Inflation has caused many families to need two paychecks to meet the basic costs of family living. Fewer women have the option of returning to school versus returning to work.

11. Clerical, sales, operative, and service jobs, plus nursing and teaching, are traditional women's occupations which continue to pay low wages because so many women keep going into them. Women need to learn non-traditional skills so they can be hired for non-traditional jobs (occupations traditionally held by men) that pay higher wages. This will reduce the crowding in women's occupations so that wages in them can gradually improve.

12. Women need programs that improve their earnings and prepare them for economic independence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study support the following recommendations:

1. A similar study should be done on the CETA-paid participants in the WENDI program, most of whom are black, since the needs and conditions of black working women are frequently more severe than those of white working women.

2. Further study should be conducted on the needs of women who are single heads of households supporting dependents, because they are a segment of the population that continues to grew rapidly on account of the high divorce rate, and because one-third of female householder families live below the poverty level in the United States.

3. Additional research is needed to determine why more reentry women have not returned to school to prepare themselves for higher-paying jobs and for non-traditional occupations, since women with higher education earn better wages, and laws have been passed to provide equal opportunity to working women.

4. Increased funding should be provided to the WENDI program for fuller implementation of its programs. Cooperative efforts with the expanded University of Central Florida branch which is located on the main campus of the community college could contribute to this effort.

5. The WENDI program should strongly encourage women to prepare themselves for non-traditional occupations, since these jobs offer higher wages and better benefits.

6. The WENDI program should seek to provide placement of reentry women with employers who will hire women to be trained on-the-job and at a reasonable salary.

7. WENDI classes should provide frequent role-models during its classes, such as, women working in non-traditional jobs, women successfully working and maintaining happy homes and marriages, and women who are single female house-

holders. Reentry women need successful role models they can identify with.

8. A study should be conducted to investigate the development of mutual support groups among women, particularly working women.

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APPENDIX A

WENDI questionnaire survey sent to women who took the course three years ago, for the purpose of evaluating the course results.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. When you finished your WENDI class, how much did you want to do the following? (Circle a number for each of your answers)

	Had Definite Plans	If I could work it out with my family	I was thinking about it	Hadn't thought about it
a. Go back to school	1	2	3	4
b. Go to work	1	2	3	4
c. Choose a different career field	1	2	3	4
d. Become a different sort of person	1	2	3	4
e. Make things better at home	1	2	3	4
f. Get involved in community of volunteer activities	1	2	3	4

2. Indicate your degree of Self-Confidence by circling the appropriate number.

	Degree of Self-Confidence			
	Very High	Moderate	Slight	Very Low
a. When you began WENDI	1	2	3	4
b. After you finished WENDI	1	2	3	4
c. Today, three years later	1	2	3	4

3. Complete the following statement by circling one number for each sentence completion. "My life has changed since I took WENDI . . ."

	Big Improvement	Moderate Improvement	No Improvement	Does Not Apply
a. in my relationship with my husband	1	2	3	4
b. in my relationship with my children	1	2	3	4
c. in my ability to continually share my learning and growing with my family	1	2	3	4
d. in my relationship with co-workers on the job	1	2	3	4
e. in my feelings of self-confidence and self-acceptance	1	2	3	4
f. in my ability to accept what is non-changeable in my life	1	2	3	4
g. in my ability to set career and educational goals that I can reach	1	2	3	4
h. in my ability to make decisions in my life and not wait helplessly for others to make my decisions for me	1	2	3	4
i. in my ability to make new friends	1	2	3	4
j. in my ability to be more assertive about my own needs and interests	1	2	3	4

4. Were you able to set a realistic career goal for yourself during the WENDI class? . . . . . ____YES ____NO

5. Did you decide to return to school after WENDI? . . . ____YES ____NO

6. Are you presently attending school? . . . ____FULL-TIME ____PART-TIME ____NO

7. If yes, do you think you would have gone back to school if you had not taken the WENDI class? . . . . ____YES ____NO ____MAYBE

8. Did WENDI help you decide what to study? . . . . ____YES ____NO ____PARTLY

9. Did you reach your educational goal? . . . . . ____YES ____NO
   ____I am still studying toward it. On _____ I will reach it.
   ____I still hope to go back and finish it.

Answer questions 10-12 only if you went back to work since WENDI.

10. Have you worked in the past three years since taking WENDI? ____ FULL-TIME
    ____PART-TIME ____NO

11. Did the WENDI class help you get a job? ____VERY HELPFUL ____SOME HELP ____NO HELP

12. Do you feel the WENDI class was helpful to you after you became employed? . . .
    ____VERY HELPFUL ____SOME HELP ____NO HELP

13. How do you feel about the job you have? ____LIKE IT VERY MUCH ____DISLIKE IT SOMEWHAT
    ____LIKE IT FAIRLY WELL ____DISLIKE IT VERY MUCH

14. In what kind of business do you work and what do you do? (your job title) _____
    _____

15. Are you a single head of a household supporting dependents? ____YES ____NO

16. How many dependents do you have at home? . . . . ____CHILDREN ____OTHER

17. What is your marital status?
    ____WHITE ____MARRIED ____DIVORCED ____SEPARATED ____WIDOWED

18. Indicate the highest grade you completed in school. ____8 ____10 ____12 ____14 ____16+

19. What is your race or ethnic group?
    ____WHITE ____BLACK ____HISPANIC ____ASIAN-AMERICAN ____AMERICAN INDIAN

20. Your age is
    ____UNDER 25 ____25-29 ____30-39 ____40-49 ____50 AND OVER

21. Has your marital statis changed since you took WENDI?
    ____NO CHANGE ____MARRIED ____DIVORCED ____SEPARATED ____WIDOWED

22. Overall, how are you feeling about yourself as a person now? Are you prospering? Feeling alive and aware? Or are you moving in "boxes"? Wearing blinders (again)? Please explain your answer. (Use a separate page if needed) _____
    _____

22. And FINALLY, in retrospect, if you were the designer of the WENDI program, what would you want it to include? (again, use a separate page if you need it) _____
    _____

Thank you for answering this questionnaire. Your answers will provide valuable insights to make the WENDI classes more responsive and useful to present WENDI participants than ever.

Very best wishes to you in your own progressing experience.

Sincerely,

Joy Forrest

Joy Forrest

APPENDIX B

Letter Introducing WENDI Questionnaire

1611 Minutemen Cswy. No. 210
Cocoa Beach, FL 32931
Telephone 305-783-6707
March 27, 1981

Dear Fellow WENDI Woman,

You and I are WENDI graduates from the year 1977.

After completing the WENDI class I began work on my master's degree in counseling and guidance at Stetson University, and I am now in sight of my degree.

But I need your help.

For my master's thesis I am conducting a survey of some of the WENDI graduates to determine how the class may have been of value to them. You were chosen to be in my sample.

It would be most helpful to me if you would take a few minutes of your time to answer the questions on the enclosed form and return it to me by April 10 or as soon as possible. You can be assured that your responses will be held in strict confidence. Only the summaries will be made available to the Director of the WENDI Program at B.C.C. and to my advisers at Stetson.

Because of the limited number who were selected to participate in the survey, it is most important that I have your response. My thesis will not be accepted unless I obtain a sufficient number that would be representative of all of the graduates. Please call me if you have questions or if any part of the form is not clear. I would enjoy having the opportunity to talk with you.

Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

Joy Forrest

Joy Forrest

P.S. A stamped, self-addressed return envelope is enclosed for your use.

APPENDIX C. Signature Slip Included with Questionnaire

Dear WENDI Woman,

It is not necessary for you to sign this form, but it would be helpful if you did, because I will have to get in touch with those who have not responded. Thus I will not bother you with another request. This slip will be destroyed when received and your name will be checked as having returned the form.

NAME_____ Thank you.

APPENDIX D. Postcard Follow-up of Questionnaire

April 13, 1981

Dear Fellow WENDI Graduate,

You will recall I sent you a WENDI questionnaire last month. It is very important to the WENDI program and to me that you respond. I need your opinions because the sample is small. Your ideas and responses, pro and con, will strengthen the WENDI program for women today.

I know you are busy, but this is extremely important. Please return your WENDI questionnaire today. We need you.

Sincerely,

Joy Forrest

APPENDIX E

Subsequent Letter Follow-up of Questionnaire

1611 Minutemen Causeway #210
Cocoa Beach, Florida 32931
Telephone 305-783-6707
April 27, 1981

Dear Friend,

My sincere thanks to those of you who responded to my postcard plea to answer my WENDI questionnaire. It's been wonderful to hear from 1977 WENDI women, even from as far away as California!

To those of you who may have "disposed" of your questionnaire or lost track of it, I am enclosing another. My study can't be completed without at least ten more answered questionnaires. Won't you be one of those important ten? I would be so grateful.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Joy Forrest

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
96 Powell Library Building
University of California
Los Angeles, California 90024

APR 23 1982